

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 NIC-01 IO-14 ACDA-19

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07

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( ISO ) W

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R 151340Z MAY 74

FM USMISSION BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3378

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

BUCHAREST 1027

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 0817

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE, GW, UR

SUBJ: GDR LEADERSHIP CONCENTRATES ON DETENTE

REF: BERLIN 770

1. SUMMARY: FUTURE OF INNER-GERMAN DETENTE IN WAKE  
BRANDT'S RESIGNATION HAS BEEN MAJOR THEME OF EAST GERMAN  
LEADERSHIP IN RECENT DAYS. SED PARTY CHIEF HONECKER  
HIMSELF SEIZED UPON CELEBRATION OF TENTH CONGRESS OF GERMAN-  
SOVIET FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY IN DRESDEN, MAY 12, TO PLUMP  
HARD FOR CONTINUED NORMALIZATION OF GDR-FRG RELATIONS.

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IN ADDITION, PREMIER SINDERMANN'S SURPRISE TRIP TO MOSCOW,

MAY 13, HAS EVOKED WESTERN PRESS SPECULATION THAT INNER-GERMAN DETENTE WAS PRIME TOPIC OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH PARTY CHIEF BREZHNEV AND PREMIER KOSYGIN. FROM VANTAGE-POINT BERLIN, IT SEEMS GDR LEADERSHIP STRIVING HARD TO MAINTAIN APPEARANCE OF MOMENTUM IN INNER-GERMAN DIALOGUE. GDR EFFORT APPARENTLY DESIGNED NOT ONLY TO BLUNT CRITICISM OF ITS INVOLVEMENT IN BRANDT'S FALL BUT ALSO TO ASSURE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY (NOT LEAST MOSCOW) THAT EAST BERLIN ACTIVELY PREPARED TO DO ITS PART IN KEEPING EAST-WEST DETENTE ON TRACK. END SUMMARY.

2. SED PARTY CHIEF HONECKER TOOK OCCASION OF TENTH CONGRESS OF GERMAN-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY IN DRESDEN, MAY 12, TO DEMONSTRATE DEPTH OF GDR COMMITMENT TO SOVIET FOREIGN-POLICY PRIORITIES. LAUDING SOVIET LEADERSHIP (READ BREZHNEV) AT EVERY TURN, HONECKER LOST NO OPPORTUNITY TO LINE GDR UP SOLIDLY BEHIND MOSCOW ON EACH AND EVERY POLITICAL ISSUE FROM PEKING TO CHILE. (HONECKER WAS PARTICULARLY ROUGH ON CHINESE, ACCUSING THEM OF JOINING WILLFULLY THE "IMPERIALIST ENEMIES OF DETENTE.") HIS MOST SIGNIFICANT REMARKS, HOWEVER WERE FOCUSED ON SUBJECT OF INNER-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS. CLAIMING CREDIT FOR MAKING RECENT EXCHANGE OF FRG/GDR REPRESENTATIVES POSSIBLE, HONECKER SAID GDR WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE ITS "POLICY OF PEACE AND DETENTE" AND WOULD MAKE USE OF ITS "POSITIVE INFLUENCE TO FURTHER THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GDR AND THE FRG." AT SAME TIME, HONECKER CAUTIONED THAT THERE WAS STILL MUCH TO DO, FOR "WHAT HAS BEEN ATTAINED (IN INNER-GERMAN SPHERE) MUST BE CONTINUALLY DEFENDED AGAINST FOES (OF GDR-FRG GENERAL RELATIONS TREATY)." REMARK WIDELY INTERPRETED AS VEILED REFERENCE TO FRG ENEMIES FO BRANDT WHO ALLEGEDLY TRYING TO EXPLOIT GUILLAUME AFFAIR TO UNDERMINE DETENTE.

3. HONECKER'S SPEECH HAS RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE LOCAL PRESS PLAY, BUT WESTERN JOURNALISTS HERE HAVE DISPLAYED RATHER MORE CURIOSITY OVER SINDERMANN'S SURPRISE VISIT TO MOSCOW, MAY 13. NOTWITHSTANDING GDR PRESS EFFORTS TO ACCENTUATE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF VISIT, MOST OF WESTERN PRESS SPECULATION IS THAT SINDERMANN WAS CALLED TO MOSCOW TO DISCUSS CONSEQUENCES OF

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BRANDT'S RESIGNATION AND TO CLEAR LINES ON NEXT STEPS ON DETENTE.

4. COMMENT: FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT, THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT GDR LEADERSHIP ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN APPEARANCE OF MOMENTUM IN INNER-GERMAN DIALOGUE. HONECKER AND COMPANY APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN STUNG BY CRITICISM OF GDR ROLE IN GUILLAUME AFFAIR AND BRANDT'S RESIGNATION

(PALM'S AND KREISKY'S COMMENTS MUST HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY UNPLEASANT), AND MAY HOPE TO RECOUP SOME INTERNATIONAL, AS WELL AS DOMESTIC, POLITICAL CREDIT BY POSING AS ARDENT CHAMPION OF DETENTE. MORE IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, GDR SEEMS PARTICULARLY INTENT IN FOLLOWING MOSCOW'S LEAD IN SIGNALLING BONN THAT IT PREPARED TO CONTINUE TO DO BUSINESS WITH NEW GOVERNMENT.

5. POSSIBLE ROLE OF SINDERMANN IN ABOVE PROCESS IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS, FOR HIS PORTFOLIO RECENTLY HAS PRETTY WELL BEEN CONFINED TO ECONOMIC MATTER. IT STRIKES US AS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT FUTURE OF INNER-GERMAN DEVELOPMENTS WAS NOT A MAJOR TOPIC OF DISCUSSION, PARTICULARLY DURING SINDERMANN'S SESSION WITH BREZHNEV. PERHAPS BEST EXPLANATION IS THAT MOSCOW WISHED TO VISIBLY DEMONSTRATE, TO EAST BERLIN AS WELL AS BONN, IMPORTANCE IT ATTACHES TO CONTINUATION DETENTE. TO HAVE SUMMONED HONECKER COULD WELL HAVE OVERPLAYED SITUATION. CALLING IN SINDERMANN ON OTHER HAND UNDERLINES IMPORTANCE OF ISSUES AT STAKE WITHOUT UNDUE RISK OF UNNECESSARILY MUDDYING INNER-SED WATERS.KLEIN

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